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14. ABSTRACT Despite the U.S. military's increased emphasis on cultural awareness and population-centric warfare as a result of lessons learned in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Joint Operation Planning Process (JOPP) fails to account fully for the inherent power, influence and effects the actions of the local populace in a conflict have on U.S. military operations. Although populations are examined during the Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment (JIPOE), the results are typically illustrated in the form of human terrain maps or cultural products which identify population centers in terms of key terrain. Therefore, planning staffs view the local populace as a physical space or human terrain in which <i>blue forces</i> and <i>red forces</i> maneuver within to achieve their objectives. Unfortunately, this practice limits effective planning, for the population is not assessed as a credible actor or groups of actors with operational capabilities. In order for the JOPP to be an effective tool for operational planning throughout all phases of warfare and across the spectrum of violence, it must be modified to incorporate a planning cell, or Green Cell, that considers the local populace as a <i>third force</i> or combination of <i>multiple forces</i> within the operational environment that act in their own interests, react and counteract to U.S. military operations, as well as to the actions of the enemy force. To address this shortfall, this paper recommends the Marine Corps' new doctrinal concept called the "Green Cell" be incorporated into the JOPP. An operational planning cell led by a Foreign Area Officer, the Green Cell maintains the cultural expertise required to modify traditional battlefield geometry during the JOPP, and consider the populace as a third force in order to determine the most effective employment of joint forces to achieve U.S. strategic and operational objectives.					
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**Changing the Battlefield Geometry of the JOPP:
Accounting for Local Populations as the Third Force in the Operational Environment
through the institution of the Green Cell**

By

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**A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the
requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.**

**The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed
by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.**

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4 May 2011

Contents

Introduction	1
Background	4
Counter-Argument	5
- Populations as a Factor of <i>Space</i>	
Analysis and Discussion	8
- Populations as a Factor of <i>Force</i>	
Recommendation	11
- Instituting the Green Cell into the JOPP	
- Staffing the Green Cell	
Conclusion	18
Bibliography	20

Abstract

Despite the U.S. military's increased emphasis on cultural awareness and population-centric warfare as a result of lessons learned in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Joint Operation Planning Process (JOPP) fails to account fully for the inherent power, influence and effects the actions of the local populace in a conflict have on U.S. military operations. Although populations are examined during the Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment (JIPOE), the results are typically illustrated in the form of human terrain maps or cultural products which identify population centers in terms of key terrain. Therefore, planning staffs view the local populace as a physical space or human terrain in which *blue forces* and *red forces* maneuver within to achieve their objectives. Unfortunately, this practice limits effective planning, for the population is not assessed as a credible actor or groups of actors with operational capabilities. In order for the JOPP to be an effective tool for operational planning throughout all phases of warfare and across the spectrum of violence, it must be modified to incorporate a planning cell, or Green Cell, that considers the local populace as a *third force* or combination of *multiple forces* within the operational environment that act in their own interests, react and counteract to U.S. military operations, as well as to the actions of the enemy force. To address this shortfall, this paper recommends the Marine Corps' new doctrinal concept called the "Green Cell" be incorporated into the JOPP. An operational planning cell led by a Foreign Area Officer, the Green Cell maintains the cultural expertise required to modify traditional battlefield geometry during the JOPP, and consider the populace as a third force in order to determine the most effective employment of joint forces to achieve U.S. strategic and operational objectives.

INTRODUCTION

The future is not one of major battles and engagements fought by armies on battlefields devoid of population; instead, the course of conflict will be decided by forces operating among the people of the world. Here, the margin of victory will be measured in far different terms than the wars of our past. The allegiance, trust, and confidence of populations will be the final arbiters of success.¹

Until recently, the formal operational planning processes used by the U.S. military services focused on traditional warfare models that divided belligerents on the battlefield into *blue forces* (friendly) and *red forces* (enemy). Indigenous populations were dismissed or relegated to secondary planning factors that were considered only in respects to collateral damage or during post-hostility operations. Many critics and historians have argued that the U.S. failure to anticipate the “Sunni Uprising” in 2003 that kicked off the insurgency in Iraq was a direct result of this flawed practice of disregarding the local population during operational planning. Consequently, in recent years all of the services, especially the Army and Marine Corps, have experienced a paradigm shift in their way of thinking about the significance of populations in the operational environment.² Now, indigenous populations are a top priority for consideration by military planners, and typically identified as the center of gravity in operational planning when developing population-centric military strategies. In addition, the concepts of human terrain mapping and cultural analysis have monopolized the intelligence community’s efforts to understand regional, tribal and religious affiliations, ethnicity, and language differences across the globe in order to identify sources of conflict,

¹ William B. Caldwell, IV, and Steven M. Leonard, “Field Manual 3-07, Stability Operations: Upshifting the Engine of Change.” *Military Review*, 88 (July/August 2008), 6.

² JP 3-0, *Joint Operations*, II-20 Per JP 3-0, “the Joint Force Commander’s operational environment is the composite of the conditions, circumstances, and influences that affect the employment of capabilities and bear on the decisions of the commander. It encompasses physical areas and factors (of the air, land, maritime, and space domains) and the information environment. Included within these are the adversary, friendly, and neutral systems that are relevant to a specific joint operation.”

instability and violent extremism.³ As a result, this new way of thinking has been incorporated into current doctrinal publications such as Army Field Manuals (FM) 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* (2006), FM 3-07 *Stability Operations* (2008), and FM 3-0 *Operations* (2008), as well as Joint Publications (JP) 5-0 *Joint Operation Planning* (2006), and JP 3-0 *Joint Operations* (2010). Lastly, to assist joint force commanders (JFCs) in framing the complex problems inherent in traditional and irregular warfare due to population dynamics, the creative process of operational design was introduced into the formal military planning process at the joint level, known as the Joint Operation Planning Process (JOPP).⁴

However, while undoubtedly increasing the JFC's knowledge of foreign populations and identifying the complexities in fighting wars among the people, these new ideas and methodologies do not go far enough to modify the rigid, formulaic construct of the JOPP. Reason being, despite these new doctrinal approaches to traditional and irregular warfare that highlight the primacy of populations in current and future conflicts, the JOPP only accounts for indigenous populations in terms of a spatial domain, often referred to as "human terrain",

³ Human terrain mapping is not yet considered a doctrinal term or practice, as reflected by its omission in JP 1-02 DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms. However, human terrain mapping is understood as the process of compiling and graphically displaying the social, cultural, ethnic, linguistic, religious, economic and political elements of the local populace contained within a specific region or area of operation on a geospatial or topographic map product in support of military operations. Cultural analysis is understood as the examination of a population's cultural factors in order to determine behavioral patterns relating to a societies cultural norms, values, and attitudes.

⁴ JP 3-0, *Joint Operations*. "Operational design is the conception and construction of the framework that underpins a campaign or joint operation plan and its subsequent execution. Operational design is the practical extension of the creative process of operational art, and is particularly helpful during course of action determination." Per FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, "operational design is the intellectual process that precedes formal planning where the Joint Force Commander (JFC) gains a clear understanding of the actual problem in the context of the operational environment and then establishes a framework in which to develop solutions." JP 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning*. "The JOPP is an orderly, analytical planning process, which consists of a set of logical steps to analyze a mission, develop, analyze and compare alternative courses of action (COAs), select the best COA, and produce a plan or order. The seven steps of the JOPP are Step 1: Initiation, Step 2: Mission Analysis, Step 3: Course of Action (COA) Development, Step 4: COA Analysis and Wargaming, Step 5: COA Comparison, Step 6: COA Approval, and Step 7: Plan or Order Development."

that is equivalent to land, air, sea and space.⁵ Thus, the JOPP fails to recognize the inherent power, influence and effects the local populace has on U.S. military operations at the operational and strategic levels of war, as the population is not considered outside of the boundaries of the Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment (JIPOE).⁶ Unfortunately, this classification of the population in terms of human terrain within the JIPOE is restrictive in that it negates the varying degrees of participation (whether active, passive, or neutral) populations can have throughout all phases of warfare and across the spectrum of violence. Historical and present-day case studies ranging from South Vietnam to Northern Ireland to Afghanistan illustrate local populations playing different roles in conflicts through a variety of ways and means, whether economic, informational, military, diplomatic or logistic. Therefore, operational planners utilizing the JOPP are ill-advised to continue viewing local populations as merely factors of physical space (i.e. human terrain) in which *blue forces* and *red forces* maneuver on the way toward achieving their strategic and operational objectives. **In order for the JOPP to be an effective tool for operational planning throughout all phases of warfare and across the spectrum of violence, it must be modified to incorporate a planning cell or Green Cell that considers the local populace as a *third force* or combination of *multiple forces* within the operational environment that act in their own interests, react and counteract to U.S. military operations, as well as to the actions of the enemy force.**

⁵ For the purpose of this paper human terrain is defined as those portions of the landscape made up of natural and manmade features that are characterized by the sociocultural composition and disposition of the local populace within the operational environment.

⁶ JP 5-0. *Joint Operation Planning*, III-16. “The primary purpose of the JIPOE is to support the JFC decision-making and planning by identifying, assessing, and estimating the enemy’s COG(s), critical factors, capabilities, limitations, intentions, and COAs that are most likely to be encountered based on the situation. JIPOE generally occurs in parallel to mission analysis, and supports mission analysis by enabling the commander and staff to visualize the full extent of the operational environment, to distinguish the known from the unknown, and to establish working assumptions regarding how the adversary and friendly forces will interact within the operational environment.”

BACKGROUND

In August 2010, the Marine Corps broke with conventional wisdom when it released the newest version of Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 5-1, *Marine Corp Planning Process (MCP)* and introduced a revolutionary concept called the “Green Cell”. Described as a key enabler to the Marine Corps staff planning process, similar to the Red Cell that assesses friendly courses of action (COA) by serving as a thinking enemy, the Green Cell forces the planning staff “to consider the population in order to promote a better understanding of the environment and the problem.”⁷ Given the Marine Corps’ history of fighting small wars, as well as the past ten years of major combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the idea of focusing its attention on indigenous populations is nothing new or revolutionary. However, the Marine Corps is the first service to make the conscious decision to modify its formal staff planning process with the expressed purpose of including indigenous populations into planning outside the confines of the Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace (IPB). This new idea modifies traditional battlefield geometry (*red forces* versus *blue forces*) and interprets the indigenous population involved in a conflict as more than an environmental factor or form of physical space (i.e. human terrain). It alters the contemporary understanding of local populations as a consideration in terrain analysis during IPB, and transforms it into a single force or grouping of forces and organizations that must be considered as active participants in the conflict.⁸ In accordance with the Marine Corps new doctrine, commanders and their planning staffs are directed to include the indigenous population as a third party or parties (i.e. *green force(s)*) for civilian considerations when

⁷ MCWP, *Marine Corps Planning Process*, 2-6

⁸ Milan Vego, *Joint Operational Warfare: Theory and Practice*, (Newport, RI: U.S. Naval War College), III-3.

framing the problem, developing COAs, and conducting the COA War Game.⁹ As a result, Marine commanders gain a deeper understanding of the operational environment, followed by predictive assessments based on the estimated reactions of the population toward their proposed COAs.

COUNTER-ARGUMENT

Populations as a Factor of *Space*

The past two decades have shown, especially since our involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq began, that we need some ability to understand and work with other cultures. Lack of understanding has led, at best, to frustration and setbacks, and, at worst, to tragedy.¹⁰

Given today's operating environments and throughout the many lessons learned from previous counterinsurgencies or small wars, it is easy to understand why military professionals felt compelled to modify traditional practices and institute new methodologies in military planning that examine indigenous populations as a factor of *space*.¹¹ For a JFC to employ military forces successfully in joint operations, regardless of whether traditional or irregular warfare, he must understand all of the elements within the operational environment. His understanding must go beyond basic tactical concepts such as obstacles, key terrain, observation, cover & concealment, and avenues of approach (OKOCA Factors), and consider "all major elements within friendly, adversary, or neutral political, military, economic, social, information, and infrastructure (PMESII) systems and subsystems that are potentially

⁹ MCWP 5-1. *Marine Corps Planning Process*. August 2010.

¹⁰ Casey Haskins. "A Practical Approach to Cultural Insight", *Military Review*; Sep/Oct 2010; 90, 5; Military Module, Pg 79. Colonel Casey Haskins, US Army, is director of Military Instruction at the US Military Academy. He was the chief of plans for the Multinational Force-Iraq and chief of staff, Iraqi Assistance Group, Baghdad, Iraq.

¹¹ Milan N. Vego. *Joint Operational Warfare: Theory and Practice*. III-7. In his work, Dr. Vego describes the factor of *space* in terms of "not only the physical environment and weather/climate but also the so-called 'human-space'", which includes "elements such as the political system, and nature of government, population size and density, economic activity, transportation, trade, ideologies, ethnicity, religions, social structure and traditions, culture, and technology."

relevant to the success of a joint operation.”¹² Through his detailed understanding of the “human space” within the operational environment, the JFC can identify surfaces and gaps, key terrain, sources of power and strength (i.e. center(s) of gravity), and critical vulnerabilities, as well as gain freedom of maneuver, generate operational tempo, and achieve surprise.

Based on the above considerations, a counterargument to the thesis of this paper can be made that new methodologies for considering population dynamics in operational planning already exist, and no further modifications need to be made to the JOPP. For instance, the U.S. Intelligence Community’s human terrain mapping initiatives, where cultural analysts painstakingly display the locations of various tribes, ethnic groups, religious sects, economic classes, and social structures on geo-spatial intelligence products, already provide situational awareness and environmental clarity to tactical commanders on the ground. Furthermore, to address the identified shortfalls in the military’s cultural understanding of foreign populations during planning and operations, the Army contracted the creation of the Human Terrain System (HTS) through its Foreign Military Studies Office (FMSO) at U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.¹³ Made up of anthropologists, foreign area experts/PhDs, and former/retired Army Special Forces officers and military Foreign Area Officers (FAO), HTS deploys Human Terrain Teams (HTTs) down to the brigade combat team (BCT) and battalion levels in Iraq and Afghanistan to advise commanders on the population dynamics and interaction within their areas of operation (AO). Their efforts to evaluate and explain the dynamics of the local populace in their assigned AOs facilitated the tactical and operational commander’s freedom

¹² JP 2-01.3 *Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment*. June 2009. II-45

¹³ Jacob Kipp, Lester Grau; Karl Prinslow; Don Smith. “The Human Terrain System: A CORDS for the 21st Century”; *Military Review*; Sep/Oct 2006; 86, 5; Military Module, 8.

of maneuver in the battlespace through the enhanced understanding of the “human terrain—the social, ethnographic, cultural, economic, and political elements of the people among whom a force is operating.”¹⁴ In addition, through their tactical interviews, engagements and rapport building with the local populace, HTTs have played “a pivotal role in helping both the U.S. and Iraqi governments realize their goals for a stable and prosperous Iraq.”¹⁵

However, while these intelligence programs have facilitated greater cultural awareness and achieved tactical successes in Iraq and Afghanistan, there still exists a definitive, capability gap in the JOPP for operational planners to consistently and accurately account for the local population outside the context of human terrain when conducting Mission Analysis, COA Development, and COA Analysis and Wargaming. Reason being, neither solution addresses the fundamental problem within the joint planning doctrine. Why is this? Despite the fact the examination of local populations in terms of *space* within the JIPOE is extremely valuable to operational planning, nowhere in the JIPOE or JOPP are local populations analyzed under the same conditions as adversaries or third party military forces. Within the JIPOE “the analysis of adversary and third party military forces is limited to the identification of those forces that could influence the joint force’s mission based on their location, mobility, general capabilities, significant weapons ranges, and strategic intent.”¹⁶ Even when the JIPOE “evaluates the impact of cultural and country characteristics on military operations,” it is done in the context of environmental considerations, and not as a factor of *force*—a potential or power that one must prepare to interact with or influence.¹⁷

¹⁴ Ibid., 9. Ethnography is defined as a branch of anthropology concerned with the description of ethnic groups (Encarta English Dictionary).

¹⁵ Jennifer Spradin. "Human Terrain Teams: Mapping a course for a peaceful, prosperous Iraq." *Soldiers*. 1 Oct. 2010: Military Module, ProQuest. Web. 1 May. 2011.

¹⁶ JP 2-01.3, *Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment*. June 2009. II-4

¹⁷ Ibid., II-44

Therefore, the JOPP does not consider the local population within the operational environment in both contexts. While the JOPP does consider the population as a factor of *space* in which the joint force must operate within, it fails to consider the population as a factor of *force* capable of influencing the joint force's mission. It is this lack of consideration and capability that inhibits operational planners using the JOPP from achieving their desired end-state of developing the most effective operation plan (OPLAN) or operation order (OPORD) for the employment of joint forces in support of specific missions to achieve U.S. strategic and operational objectives.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Populations as a Factor of *Force*

War amongst the people is different: it is the reality in which the people in the streets and houses and fields—all the people, anywhere—are the battlefield. Military engagements can take place anywhere: in the presence of civilians, against civilians, in defense of civilians. Civilians are the targets, objectives to be won, as much as an opposing force.¹⁸

Dr. Milan Vego's work on joint operational warfare defines the factor of *force* in primarily military terms relating to a state's "armed forces" and their military aspects of "combat potential" and "combat power."¹⁹ While Vego's definition (similar to the JP 2-01.3 *JIPOE*) neglects to mention civilian populations when addressing force capabilities, it is arguable that his descriptions of military forms of power are comparable to those forms of power contained within any civilian population. For example, the tangible and intangible factors of military forces range from "the number of personnel, weapons, and equipment; physical mobility; firepower; command organization; logistics; and quality of weapons and equipment," to human elements such as "cohesion of an alliance/coalition, strength of public

¹⁸ General Sir Rupert Smith. *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World*. 6

¹⁹ Milan Vego, *Joint Operational Warfare: Theory and Practice*, III-33.

support for war, quality of national or military leadership, morale and discipline, training, and command and control”, respectively.²⁰ Yet, if one compares tangible and intangible factors of military forces, such as weapons, equipment, mobility, leadership and morale, with civil considerations such as civil disobedience, public demonstrations, Internet chat rooms, blogospheres, smart phones, international media, globalization, mass migration, and financial donations, the combat potential and combat power of civilian populations are apparent.

Even more so, given the knowledge of theories such as the “Accidental Guerrilla”, as illustrated in David Kilcullen’s book of the same name, regarding the population’s ability to assume multiple roles in insurgencies, or the popular protests that began sweeping through North Africa and the Middle East in late 2010/early 2011, it is evident that civilian populations occupying a conflicted region have an inherent power of their own. Today’s global information environment, “social networking”, instant communications, and internet banking services, provide civilian populations with the tangible capabilities to exercise their independent will (based on their individual and/or collective interests) as a third party or *green force(s)* within the operational environment at a strength unprecedented in the history of modern warfare.²¹

Further highlighting the complexities of this issue, the interests of the local populations, when considered as a factor of *force*, may or may not be aligned with either friendly or enemy forces involved in the conflict. Therefore, when accounting for the independent will and competing interests of the multiple tribes, ethnic groups, religious

²⁰ Ibid., III-35.

²¹ James Jay Carafano. “Mastering the Art of Wiki: Understanding Social Networking and National Security”, *Joint Forces Quarterly*. “Social networking has the potential to touch every aspect of national security including gathering and vetting publicly available open source information, gauging and influencing public opinion, distributing ‘risk communications’ (such as how to respond after a disaster), conducting research and analysis, developing policies, planning and analysis, developing policies, planning and implementing programs and activities in the field, and conducting information operations (the integrated employment of electronic warfare, computer network operations, psychological operations, deception, and operations security).”

organizations, economic classes, and social cliques within a given operational environment, there is significant potential for the local populace to positively or negatively influence joint military operations.

For these reasons, the JOPP must be modified, for the JFCs can no longer afford to view local populations as strictly a factor of *space* or terrain at the operational level and above. Granted, as stated earlier, initially it is essential that the JFC gain a detailed cultural understanding of the local populace within the context of the operational environment through the study of the human terrain. The JFC requires this understanding to develop and communicate his operational design for the framing of the problem prior to Mission Analysis. However, the JFC must then be able to utilize the JOPP to apply his knowledge of the local populace during Mission Analysis and COA Development. When developing friendly COAs, the JOPP must provide operational planners with the mechanism to assess their COAs against an adversary/enemy who operates among the population, as well as against that same population or organizations within the population that function in support of, against, or independent of the JFC's operational objectives. Bottom-line, every action that the JFC takes in his COA will elicit a reaction from not only the identified enemy force, threat, or insurgent, but it will also elicit a reaction from the local populace. Whether organized in mass or in disparate pockets of rural, urban, religious, tribal, and ethnic societies, the population of an area maintains its own force capability and capacity. Therefore, the JFC would be wise to assess his COAs against not only a thinking enemy, but a living, breathing, thinking population, as well.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Instituting the Green Cell into the JOPP

...if we had better understood the Iraqi culture and mindset, our war plans would have been even better than they were, [and] the plan for the post-war period and all of its challenges would have been far better...we must improve our cultural awareness... to inform the policy process.²²

Instituting the concept of the Green Cell into the JOPP provides the JFC with the tools needed to bridge the gap between understanding the operational environment (JIPOE) and actualizing that understanding in the conduct of the JOPP for the most effective employment of joint military forces to achieve strategic and operational objectives. This conceptual bridge is constructed through the implementation of the Green Cell in Steps 2 (Mission Analysis), 3 (COA Development) and 4 (COA Analysis and Wargaming) of the JOPP. Each of these steps presents a unique opportunity for operational planners to consider the population's composition, disposition, strength, motivations, leadership, internal/external influences, combat potential, communications/network infrastructure, and reactions to military operations.

When first exploring the functions of the Green Cell inside the JOPP, it is imperative that the Green Cell maintains a direct relationship with the Joint Intelligence Section (J-2). Through the collection, processing and analyzing of cultural intelligence and ethnographic information, the J-2 is best prepared to conduct human terrain mapping of the joint operations area (JOA) in order to evaluate the population as a factor of *space* when developing the JIPOE. During the JIPOE, the J-2 describes the demography of the operational environment in terms of population ethnicity, age, mortality, religion, language,

²² William Wunderle. *Through the Lens of Cultural Awareness: Planning Requirements in Wielding the Instruments of National Power*. Slides. URL: http://www.slideshare.net/wdwunderle/Through-the-Lens-of-Cultural-Awareness-Master?from=share_email_logout2. (accessed on 24 April 2011). Quotation used is by Ike Skelton, in a letter to Donald Rumsfeld, October 23, 2003.

and literacy, as well as political, diplomatic, economic, agricultural, medical/health, and sociological considerations. By working closely with the J-2, the Green Cell assists in the development of the JIPOE through its expertise in regional culture, ideology, language, politics, military, economics and demographics, thereby facilitating a more in-depth, relevant and holistic assessment of the population.

However, whereas the J-2's function during the JIPOE is to support the JFC's decision-making and planning through its examination of the operational environment within the context of the enemy or threat, the primary function of the Green Cell during the JIPOE is to identify and assess the key cultural aspects of the population across all lines of operation in order to evaluate its capabilities as a factor of *force*.²³ The Green Cell fulfills this task during the planning process by translating all of the previously listed considerations into the predicted consequent reactions of the population during Mission Analysis, COA Development and the COA War Game. Although the functions of the J-2 and Green Cell are closely related, they are separate and distinct. As well, dependent on how the Green Cell is staffed, it has the potential to provide considerations for other civilian organizations that may also be conducting activities in the conflict area but are not typically covered by the traditional intelligence capabilities of the J-2, such as intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), or international organizations (IOs).²⁴

In Mission Analysis, the Green Cell assists planners in determining the military end-state, objectives, and initial effects; assessing the friendly and enemy centers of gravity, and critical factors; reviewing the strategic communication guidance; and, conducting the initial risk assessment. Through its unique understanding of the population, the Green Cell

²³ Maj Matthew R. Black. "Cultural IPB: The Doctrinal Gap"; *Marine Corps Gazette*; December 2010; Vo. 94, No.12.

²⁴ MCWP 5-1, *Marine Corps Planning Process*, 2-6.

facilitates the planning staff's consideration of various potential adversaries that could develop due to military actions, as well as potential allies, supporters, and resources within the population. In addition, the Green Cell identifies other civilian groups and/or organizations functioning inside the operational environment that could affect the friendly and enemy centers of gravity, critical factors, strengths, weaknesses, and critical vulnerabilities. As a result of the Green Cell's contribution to the Mission Analysis process, the JFC's Restated Mission Statement, Commander's Intent, and Planning Guidance will be culturally sensitive, suitable to the population, and achievable within the context of the operational environment.

Next, in the conduct of COA Development, many of the activities of the Green Cell parallel those of the already established and understood Red Cell. Similar to how the Red Cell assisted the J-2 in developing the enemy's Most Likely and Most Dangerous COAs during the JIPOE in order to support the JFC's decision-making, the Green Cell supports COA Development by providing culturally relevant insights into the civilian population's Most Likely and Most Dangerous *responses* to the enemy and friendly COAs. These insights consider and encompass as many of the various civilian groups and organizations as possible, to include but not limited to tribes, families, ethnicities, agencies, and social groups/networks (as well as those significant organizations which may operate in cyber-space).²⁵

As the planners work to develop potential COA's, the Green Cell aids their ability to determine the type of military action that should be taken to achieve the desired effects on the population; the necessary composition and strength of those friendly units required to conduct the military action; at what time and the duration those military actions should be taken in relation to religious, tribal or cultural events, holidays, anniversaries, or other

²⁵ Ibid., 3-2.

civilian considerations; the location or where military action should occur within the operational environment; and, how that action should occur in relation to the population as to elicit a positive or desired response.²⁶ Lastly, the Green Cell assists the JFC and planners in refining the risk assessment, as well as identifying and assessing potential hazards to mission accomplishment. This is done through the Green Cell's predictive assessments of the population's reactions to the proposed friendly COAs.

During the Analysis of Friendly Courses of Action (War Game), the Green Cell 'plays' the role of the population (or various civilian groups therein) and pursues their point of view when considering the actions and counteractions of the friendly forces to the enemy force (Red Cell) reactions. This is a distinct change to the traditional model of War Gaming, where the Blue Forces and Red Forces face-off against each other on a map board. With the institution of the Green Cell, operational planners incorporate a third party or parties into the conflict that can take the form of a "Perpetrator, Enabler, Cooperative Adversary, or Victim" to either the friendly or enemy forces participating in the conflict.²⁷ In addition, as illustrated by Major Jay C. Land, USA, in regards to the role of the affected populace in COIN Operations, "it is possible for the affected population to shift roles over time or fulfill multiple roles simultaneously due to changing conditions in the operating environment."²⁸ As a result, the Green Cell, similar to the Red Cell, develops critical decision points relative to the friendly COAs, and forces the planning staff to address the full breadth of consequences due to friendly actions and enemy reactions across all lines of operation during the War Game.

²⁶ JP 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning*, III-28

²⁷ Jay C. Land, "Decisive Point, Center of Gravity or Something Else: The effort to ascertain the role of the affected populace in COIN Operations"; 26 April 2010; Joint Military Operations Department, NWC., 4

²⁸ Ibid., 4

At the completion of the COA War Game, the Green Cell has tested the friendly COA against the “independent will” of the local populace. If done correctly, the JFC and operational planners gain a greater appreciation for the various interests and motivations of the local populace; the different groups within; their potential alliances, resources and threats; the combat potential of the population; and, any indicators and warnings of potential civil unrest, violence or hostile acts by the population aimed at friendly and/or enemy forces. Per MCWP 5-1, “this form of interaction coupled with feedback loops accounts for the nonlinear nature of military operations,” and provides the commander and staff with a more realistic outlook on the potential success or failure of each COA to achieve its operational and strategic objectives.²⁹

Following the completion of the War Game and the COA Approval, the Green Cell assesses any branches and sequels being considered. It also provides the JFC and staff continuous feedback on the execution of friendly force operations. As the adage says, “no plan survives first contact”, so goes the independent will of the population and the dynamic nature of the operational environment. The Green Cell’s utility continues in its ability to reassess the situation within the operational environment and provide timely and culturally relevant advice to the JFC as unforeseen events develop during the conflict.

Staffing the Green Cell

Due to the highly complex and intellectually intense tasks assigned to the Green Cell, the composition of its members is open to much debate. Many cultural experts and government officials familiar with human terrain mapping argue that there are no Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) inside the Department of Defense (DOD) inventory capable

²⁹ MCWP 5-1, *Marine Corps Planning Process*. 4-1.

of meeting this requirement for sociocultural expertise. Many of these arguments, like that of Dr. Pauline Kusiak, PhD, are based on the perception that the simple realities of military budgets, manpower and operational tempo preclude the Services from educating, training or maintaining personnel in focused study areas long enough to acquire the depth of knowledge necessary to conduct the detailed sociocultural research, study, and analysis required to understand foreign cultures intimately. Kusiak states that it is unreasonable to expect military professionals who are “first and foremost soldiers, not scholars” and must be capable of responding to crisis anywhere in the world to develop adequate numbers of “school trained” personnel that can perform functions that take “quality ethnographic researchers... anywhere from five to eight years of focused study in languages, area orientation, and social and cultural theory” to develop.³⁰ Therefore, by this rationale, the counterargument to the establishment of a Green Cell in the JOPP would be that it is virtually impossible for military officers to maintain the expertise needed to carry-out this function effectively.

Coincidentally, the Army’s Human Terrain System (HTS), has endorsed this opinion. Rather than advocating for the continued development of officers and enlisted personnel already serving in the military to function as cultural experts, HTS recruited civilian anthropologists and other social scientists out of academia, and deployed them to Iraq and Afghanistan to serve as advisers on operational level staffs and in tactical units. HTS

³⁰ Pauline Kusiak, “Sociocultural Expertise and the Military: Beyond the Controversy”, *Military Review*; Nov/Dec 2008; 88, 6; *Military Module*, 74. “In 2008, Dr. Pauline Kusiak was detailed to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy where she served as a strategist and subject matter expert on social science research and analysis issues for the Department of Defense. When she wrote the article, she was a Sub-Saharan Africa social and cultural research analyst at the Strategic Studies Detachment of the 4th Psychological Operations Group at Fort Bragg, NC.”

advertises the capability to support JFCs anywhere in the world through a pool of deployable human terrain teams (HTT), reach-back research cells, and subject-matter expert networks.³¹

While on the surface HTS appears to be a viable solution for the JFC's capability shortfall in sociocultural knowledge for operational planning, there is already a more durable, doctrinal solution available. Rather than invest in a "contract-based" solution to acquire civilian social scientists and ethnographic researchers that will never formally reside on any official military tables of organization, why not reinvest those limited resource dollars into pre-existing human capital that already exists within the military manpower system? Specifically, the Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Program, which was started in the early 1970's, was developed to perform similar functions to what is required by the Green Cell. In addition, FAO's are not contracted civilians or academics like that of HTS. FAOs are military officers with unique regional expertise that already exists on the T/O's of the geographic combatant commands and their associated service and functional components.

FAOs are required to possess the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities to serve as a regional expert assigned to the JFC. They are trained and educated to be proficient in foreign language, cultural and regional knowledge, and diplomacy. FAOs are also required to operate effectively within the joint, interagency, international, multi-national (JIIM), and military service-level environments. Per Department of Defense Directive Number 1315.17, dated April 28, 2005, the following is DOD Policy:

The Combatant Commands shall have the requisite war fighting capabilities to achieve success on the non-linear battlefields of the future. These critical war fighting capabilities include foreign language proficiency and detailed knowledge of the regions of the world gained through in-depth study and personal experience...

³¹ Jacob Kipp, Lester Grau; Karl Prinslow; Don Smith, "The Human Terrain System: A CORDS for the 21st Century"; ; *Military Review*; Sep/Oct 2006; 86, 5; Military Module, 9.

To provide this capability for the Department of Defense, the Military Departments shall deliberately develop a corps of FAOs, who shall be commissioned officers with a broad range of military skills and experiences; have knowledge of political-military affairs; have familiarity with the political, cultural, sociological, economic, and geographic factors of the countries and regions in which they are stationed; and have professional proficiency in one or more of the dominant languages in their regions of expertise.³²

Based on the above rationale, the FAO is the ideal candidate to lead the Green Cell in the JOPP. Mr. Ben Connable, a Retired Marine Corps Major and former Middle East FAO, validates this argument in his description of how FAOs were utilized in Iraq between 2004 and 2008 for “coordinating tribal liaison, providing cultural input to information operations, and offering mitigating options during intensive combat operations.”³³ Connable further attests to the FAO, Civil Affairs (CA) staff, and Psychological Operations (PSYOP) leaders’ ability to provide timely, accurate and culturally relevant information and analysis to the JFC and staff during the planning process for combat operations in Iraq. While the FAO is uniquely qualified to lead the Green Cell, all three of these occupational fields (FAO, CA and PSYOP) contain a tremendous amount of knowledge in their understanding of populations, cultures, economic development, and social influences. Each specialty makes a strong addition to the Green Cell by providing greater insight into civil considerations and the predictive cultural analysis of the independent will of the indigenous population.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the JOPP should be modified to incorporate the Green Cell and provide JFCs and operational planners with the necessary doctrine and capability required to effectively account for the local population as the *third force* or combination of *multiple forces* within the operational environment when considering the development of “national

³² Paul Wolfowitz, DoDD 1315.17, USD P&R, 25 April 2005.

³³ Ben Connable “All Our Eggs in a Broken Basket: How the Human Terrain System is Undermining Sustainable Military Cultural Competence”, March-April 2009; *Military Review*. Pg 60

strategic objectives and national military strategy to shape events, meet contingencies, and respond to unforeseen crises.”³⁴ By incorporating the Green Cell and formally staffing it with Foreign Area Officers (FAOs) who maintain the requisite cultural knowledge, regional expertise and planning abilities, the JFC dramatically increases the effectiveness of the JOPP to support operational planning for the employment of joint military capabilities in any operational environment throughout all phases of warfare and across the spectrum of violence.

³⁴ Joint Pub 5-0. *Joint Operation Planning*, 1-4. “Joint operation planning – the focus of JP 5-0 – is the overarching process that guides joint force commanders (JFCs) in developing plans for the employment of military power within the context of national strategic objectives and national military strategy to shape events, meet contingencies, and respond to unforeseen crises.”

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